

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 123245
ORIGIN ORM-02

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 IO-13 ISO-00 DHA-02 SCA-01 AID-05
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DRAFTED BY D/HA/ORM:GLWARREN,JR.
APPROVED BY D/HA:J.L.CARLIN
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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
INFO USMISSION GENEVA

UNCLAS STATE 123245

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SREF, AS

SUBJECT: AUSTRALIA AND REFUGEES

REF: CANBERRA 3732, STATE 48276

1. ANNOUNCEMENT BY AUSTRALIAN MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION THAT
GOA WILL INCREASE ITS REFUGEE INTAKE IS INDEED GOOD NEWS
AND WE WARMLY WELCOME IT. THE ACCEPTANCE OF A LARGER
NUMBER OF INDOCHINESE REFUGEES FROM THE CAMPS IN THAILAND
WILL BE PARTICULARLY HELPFUL. WE WOULD ALSO HOPE THAT THE
AUSTRALIA WILL ALSO GIVE ATTENTION TO INDOCHINESE BOAT
CASES WHEREVER POSSIBLE.

2. WE ARE EQUALLY PLEASED THAT GOA PLANS TO REINFORCE
ITS TIES WITH THE UNHCR, A POSITIVE STEP WHICH SHOULD
SERVE TO BETTER ACQUAINT AUSTRALIAN OFFICIALS WITH THE
SERIOUS PROBLEMS OF REFUGEES AROUND THE WORLD. AT SOME
APPROPRIATE TIME WE WOULD HOPE THE GOA WOULD ALSO REVIEW
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THE POSSIBILITY OF RENEWING ITS ASSOCIATION WITH THE INTER-
GOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION (ICEM). WHILE
AUSTRALIA IS NO LONGER A MEMBER OF ICEN THE GOA PRESENTLY
DOES REIMBURSE ICEM FOR A COMPREHENSIVE LANGUAGE TRAINING
PROGRAM FOR PROSPECTIVE MIGRANTS. SUCH SPECIALIZED PRO-

JECTS ARE UNDERTAKEN BY ICEM FOR NON-MEMBERS FROM TIME TO

TIME. FULL MEMBERSHIP WOULD OF COURSE ENTITLE THE GOA TO THE FULL RANGE OF ICEM SERVICES ON BEHALF OF NATIONAL MIGRANTS IN EUROPE AND FOR REFUGEES IN VARIOUS PARTS OF THE WORLD. THE DEPARTMENT WOULD BE INTERESTED TO KNOW THEREFORE IF THE GOA IS GIVING ANY THOUGHT TO REJOINING ICEM.

3. AUSTRALIA WAS FOR MANY YEARS A STAUNCH MEMBER OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY CONCERNED WITH REFUGEES AND A GOOD PARTNER, ALONG WITH CANADA, IN THE LARGER RESETTLEMENT EFFORT FOR REFUGEES AND NATIONAL MIGRANTS. THIS CURRENT STEP IS THUS ALL THE MORE WELCOME. VANCE

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